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for a grant!**

- **Make this the year
to become involved
with your commu-
nity...and MEPI
activities!**

Responsible Citizenship is the Concern of Moroccan Youth

By Wahid Labidi



A group photo of the participants

The Arab Foundation for Development and Citizenship (AFDC) in cooperation with the United Nations Development Program—Information and Communication Technology for Development of Arab Region (UNDP– ICTIDAR) and through the support of MEPI organized in November 2009 two workshops on "the Concept of Responsible Citizenship" in Casablanca, Morocco. The workshops, which were attended by forty young Moroccan men and women, come as part of the AFDC's project to spread the culture of responsible citizenship, which is based on

the balance between rights and responsibilities. In a pre-questionnaire most of selected candidates expressed their need to instigate responsible citizenship in their communities, in a way that would empower them to enjoy their rights and enable them to carry out their responsibilities in return.

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The Arab Foundation for Development and Citizenship (AFDC) seeks to promote the concept of citizenship, by promoting the values of human rights and democracy in the Arab World. The United Nations Development Program—Information and Communication Technology for Development of Arab Region (UNDP– ICTIDAR) relies on a strategic approach to implement the ongoing projects in the region. It realizes the vision of achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which set clear targets for reducing poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against women by 2015.

For more details about the ADFDC and the UNDP-ICTIDAR please visit:
www.arabfdc.org
www.ictdar.org

Continued from page 1

Along the sessions, participants reviewed the rights as they are set out in international human rights law and studied relevant Moroccan legislation as well as the impact of each provision of some of these initiatives. It is important to note that these two workshops come as part of a comprehensive project that is being implemented by AFDC in Morocco, Algeria,



The Video is produced by Abderrahim Al Hani, Podcasting Club, Sale

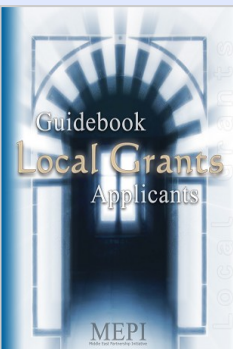
these rights on youth and society. Then they presented suggestions of initiatives that they can implement in their local communities, which would strengthen their “Responsible Citizenship” concept and help them to better develop it in their respective communities. AFDC will consider supporting Tunisia, Egypt and Lebanon targeting 200 young men and women and aiming at creating a responsible Arab Citizen through trainings and engagement in relevant follow-up programs at local level. The project is supported by a 2009 MEPI Civil Society Grant. ■

Submit Your Grant Applications Now!

Funding is available now for Local Grants. Please contact your country’s U.S. Embassy MEPI Committee and see the guidebook available on our

[website](http://www.medregion.mepi.state.gov) for step-by-step instructions in English and Arabic.

www.medregion.mepi.state.gov



By MEPI Grants Unit

Salaries are very often a subject of confusion when we try to prepare a budget. Sometimes this leads to avoidable disallowable costs.

In general terms, except for organization-furnished vehicles, all salaries, fringe benefits and related costs can be allowable when reasonable, necessary to the project and allocable to it.

The salary of an employee hired under a federally funded project is considered reasonable when it is comparable to that paid to another employee doing similar work for non federally funded activity or, if that data is not available, comparable to salaries paid by similar organization doing a similar kind of work. For example, an organization cannot pay a MEPI funded training project manager double the amount it paid an election monitoring project manager 6 months before.

In any case the salary has to be reasonable when compared to the services rendered. It also needs to conform to the written personnel policies adopted and implemented by the recipient organization. This implies that the organization shouldn’t breach its own policies to take advantage of the additional funding available. The MEPI reviewers will pay special attention to hiring of trustees and officers and their relatives. An unreasonable increase in the level of compensation coinciding with the awarding of new grant can be disallowed, even if supported by a change in the policies of the organization.

Finally to be able to demonstrate the allocability of the salary costs to the project, the recipient organization must prepare the payroll based on an after-the-fact time-sheet for each employee determining its actual activity. This means that the time sheet shouldn’t be pre-filled according to the budgeted time allocated for the project. The time-sheet covers one pay-period and is counter-signed by the immediate supervisor of the employee. Failure to document the payroll correctly will result in rejection of the costs in case of review.

A lot more details related to this issue can be found in [The Code of Federal Regulations: Part 230 on Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations](#): Appendix B- Selected Items of Costs: item 8- Compensation for personal services. ■

MEPI Confronting Corruption and Supporting Good Governance

December 9, The International Anti-Corruption Day

"We have identified corruption as the single greatest obstacle to economic and social development."

—The World Bank

MEPI Empowers Future Young Leaders on Parliamentary Work to Prevent Corruption

In the Palestinian Territories, the MEPI grant to the Society Voice Foundation (SVF), a registered Palestinian NGO, is building capacities and raising awareness among youth on how to conduct an advocacy campaign to combat corruption. Through the "Empower Future Leadership on Parliamentary Work to Prevent Corruption" project, SVF is training 150 young leaders, aged between 25 and 35, in parliamentary work.

The project held the first of five four-day training workshops that will be conducted in different parts of Gaza Strip. The first training session was informative and focused on raising Palestinian youths' awareness on how to conduct an advocacy campaign and exposed participants to the United Nations agreement on facing corruption in the Palestinian Territories.

Following the training sessions participants were divided into

smaller groups to study projects, uncover corruption and identify ways to address it.

In November, SVF broadcasted two radio programs. The first program was on the role of youth in facing and preventing corruption and the second one was on the role of youth and political participation. Apart from radio programs, SVF organized four town hall meetings. The last meeting was organized in November. Twenty-five participants from different institutions attended the meeting and discussed the role of youth in effecting social change.

The project will broadcast twelve radio programs in total to debate the role of youth in facing and preventing corruption in Palestinian society. In addition, twenty-four town hall meetings are planned to instill concepts such as transparency, accountability and integrity in governance. ■



Department of State/Bureau of International Information Program

Anti-corruption Public Awareness Campaign through Theatre

Association Théâtre Aquarium, a registered Moroccan NGO, implemented a project called "Anti-corruption Public Awareness Campaign through Theatre".

On December 7, Aquarium launched its first campaign through the performance of the "Al Hor Bel Ghamza" play that addresses the issue of corruption. The play coincides with the International Anti-Corruption Day. The

performance is the first of a series that will be performed across the country to raise awareness about the threat of corruption and the importance of fighting its pernicious effects on society.

Targeting 12,000 Moroccan citizens, the project will utilize 30 theatrical performances in total in partnership with various NGOs to educate people about transparency, accountability and integrity in governance. ■

The Role of Civil Society in Facing Corruption

Governments in the Americas agreed to a regional anticorruption convention in 1996, but it was not until several years later, at the instigation of civil society organizations led by Transparency International, that parties to the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption agreed to a Follow-Up Mechanism to promote implementation. Since creation of the mechanism, civil society has pressed for ever broader opportunities to present its views and to engage with governments in promoting implementation. With those opportunities, it has provided a critical nongovernmental perspective and momentum for reform. Civil society has played a similar role in reviews of enforcement of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development Convention on Bribery of Foreign Public Officials and of the anticorruption conventions of the Council of Europe and its Group of States Against Corruption. It is clear from experience with this and other anticorruption conventions that civil society plays a key role in promoting action on the ground. As Transparency International has pointed out in its recommendations to the Conference of States Parties, a critical component of such a process will be transparency and broad and reliable opportunities for civil society participation. ■

MEPI Alumni

MEPI Legal and Business Fellowship Program Empowers Participants to Face Future Challenges

The Legal and Business Fellowship Program (LBFP) is sponsored by the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) and administered by (AMIDEAST). The program provides young women specialized in business and law an opportunity to practice their professional skills and gain real-world experience to help them grow as professionals and advocate for an improved investment climate and legal reforms in their host countries.

Twenty-two Arab women were selected for their impact as legal and business leaders from countries across the Middle East and North Africa.

The program started on April 21 and ended on August 18, 2009. The Fellowship included a four-week course at the University of Pennsylvania, Wharton School, in Philadelphia followed by a three-month professional training in various prestigious U.S. Law Firms and companies.

Lebanese participants shared their experiences as part of the LBFP Program.



Rita Abou Aoun

"The four-months LBFP expanded my knowledge and professional skills. It empowered me to face future challenges and to look for new challenges!"

Rita Bou Aoun, 26, a trainee lawyer specialized in international business law, talked about her experience as a participant in the LBFP program. "I was very fortunate to participate in the Legal and Business Fellowship Program (LBFP) organized and funded by (MEPI). The four-month LBFP program expanded my knowledge and professional skills. It empowered me to

"LBFP was a great achievement for me on both personal and professional levels. It drives me forward every day to work harder to achieve my goals."

face future challenges and look for new challenges!"

"Being selected and going on this program was a lifetime experience," said Sara Ali, Business Information Security Officer and Technology Consultant,

in Citibank in Lebanon. With much enthusiasm, Ali added that "LBFP was a great achievement for me on both personal and professional level. It drives me forward every day and reminds me that we have skills which the world needs and we should constantly develop them and work harder to achieve our goals."

For Walaa Tfaily, a personal banker, in SGBL Bank in Lebanon, the training went beyond achieving the academic and professional goals to reach to a personal and life experience. "We had a personality test that reflected our inner strengths and weaknesses. We learned about social wealth creation, entrepreneurial skills, finance...and most importantly knew more about ourselves" said Tfaily.

Three-month fellowship in top-tier U.S. companies:

After completion of the academic program, the women were relocated to different U.S. cities to complete a three-month fellowship in top-tier U.S. companies and law firms.

Sara Ali, had her internship at Intel. The internship "gave me excellent exposure to the U.S. market." At Intel, Ali joined the Emerging Markets Platform Group (EMPG), which is responsible for creating and marketing an end-to-end education solution called Intel Learning Series. "My role was to drive the

"We learned about social wealth creation, entrepreneurial skills, and finance and most importantly knew more about ourselves"

usage of a customer relationship management system (CRM) which the group recently deployed and write a user's manual and promote awareness on how to fully utilize the system," explained Ali.

Tfaily had also her internship in Intel Corp, at



Walaa Tfaily

the Emerging Market Platform Group (EMPG). The internship in (EMPG) "brought what we learned at Wharton into practice, and I really enjoyed this activity that involves spreading education through technology, creating jobs and sufficient economies in some very poor places in the world, And being part of this unit, even for a short period of time, is really something to be proud of". ■

MEPI Medregion Update Supplement

Forum for the Future, Marrakesh 2009

A Participant's View of the Marrakesh Forum for the Future

By Slah Jouchi

The participation of Mrs. Hillary Clinton in the activities of the sixth Forum for the Future in the Moroccan city of Marrakesh was a strong indication that the Forum has been saved from an inevitable demise. After the end of the fifth Forum for the Future, which was hosted in the United Arab Emirates, many expected that the endeavor had exhausted its objectives. Resorting to Morocco, again, was strong evidence of the Arabic governments' desire to dispose of this annual meeting in which said governments find themselves, in the presence of representatives of civil society organizations, periodically forced to present what they have achieved in the field of political reforms. However, when the attendance of the American Secretary of State was confirmed, everyone realized that the Administration of President Obama has decided not to abandon this initiative, but to activate and step out from the state of deadlock it had reached.

Everyone was waiting for Mrs. Clinton's speech, to know the content of the message the new United States Administration wished to communicate to the various components of the Forum for the Future. Mrs. Clinton's speech did, indeed, reveal the quality of the course that shall be adopted for the few upcoming years. It is a course different from the conduct that the previous U.S. Administration advocated, but it remained faithful to the principle of calling for a process of reform in the Arab Region, including a political one.

The new Administration believes that supporting social and educational infrastructure is bound to provide the suitable environment necessary for the advancement of human rights and democracy. They also hold the belief that this needs to be tested in reality in communities that lack fundamental freedoms. Initiating projects that support the participation of women, provide more work and partnership opportunities and give opportunity to develop individual capabilities of young people in the field of technological innovation, are all good and important deeds. However, said deeds will have little impact if fundamental freedoms are not available; especially the freedom of expression and association, and the freedom to instigate special initiatives.

The U.S. Secretary of State not only delivered a speech to communicate her message, but also supported it by another act of no less importance. By meeting a number of civil society activists, the U.S. Secretary of State established before the media that she wants to emphasize that supporting activists and their organizations will be a priority for the U.S. Government during the upcoming phase. This, in itself, is another message of no less significance. However, the democrats of the Arab World need to see effective action to back up the Secretary of State message, especially after their bitter disappointment vis-a-vis the double-standard treatment manifested by the previous U.S. Administration towards this case in particular, where the statements and practices



Secretary of State Hillary Clinton with Civil Society Figures

were at odds.

Whilst waiting for the future, the meeting between Mrs. Clinton and the representatives of the civil societies in the region made for a useful opportunity for both parties. Mrs. Clinton on the one hand, listened to the concerns and priorities of both civil and field activists who accepted the invitation out of their keenness to deepen the dialogue with decision-makers in Washington in order to convey a strong opinion on all of the reforms per-

taining to their countries, especially with regards to independence and sovereignty. On the other hand, this meeting provided a platform for these activists to understand the foundations of the new American speech that recognizes and understands their region and is more seriously interactive with the needs and causes of its people: starting from an uncompromising respect for democracy to reaching a fair and lasting solution for the Palestinian Cause. ■

On the Human Rights Agenda for the 21st Century

"Six weeks ago, in Morocco, I met with civil society activists from across the Middle East and North Africa. They exemplify how lasting change comes from within and how it depends on activists who create the space in which engaged citizens and civil society can build the foundations for rights-respecting development and democracy. Outside governments and global civil society cannot impose change, but we can promote and bolster it and defend it. We can encourage and provide support for local grassroots leaders, providing a lifeline of protection to human rights and democracy activists when they get in trouble, as they often do, for raising sensitive issues and voicing dissent. This means using tools like our Global Human Rights Defenders Fund, which in the last year has provided targeted legal and relocation assistance to 170 human rights defenders around the world."

- Secretary of State Hillary Clinton

Georgetown University
December 14, 2009

MEPI: SUPPORT FOR EGYPTIAN CIVIL SOCIETY REFORM INITIATIVES

Middle East Partnership Initiative Funding for Civil Society Reform Initiatives

Application Deadline: December 31, 2009

The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) of the U.S. Department of State is pleased to announce, pending availability of funds, support for civil society reform initiatives in Egypt. Please follow all instructions below carefully.

Purpose of Grant: Through this grant opportunity, MEPI intends to support Egyptian civil society, including civil companies, women's groups, and professional associations that are committed to building democracies and undertaking reform. Funding is available for projects that increase political openness and democratic processes, create new economic opportunities, enhance access to and quality of education systems, and/or empower women. Priority will be given for local projects that translate reform demands into tangible projects, including in the areas of democratic reform, the expansion of public participation in political life, women's political, economic, and social empowerment, and the legal environment for civil society.

Size of Awards: Awards typically range between \$ 25,000 to \$100,000.

Length of Grant: Projects should be completed within one year.

Application Process: Please send completed applications (using the attached form)

to the MEPI Regional Office in Tunis (via email: mepi-medregion@state.gov)

OR via fax: +216-71107-436. Applications can be submitted in English or Arabic

and all final grant agreements will be concluded in English.

Application Deadline: December 31, 2009

A MEPI staff panel will assess proposals based on their quality, relevance, prospect for success, and originality, and will inform applicants of their status by January 20, 2010.

We look forward to receiving creative proposals that strengthen the role of civil society in reform process at the local level.



Middle East Partnership Initia-

MEPI Regional Office Tunis

Address: U.S. Embassy
Les Berges du Lac—1053
Tunis, Tunisia

Phone: + 216 71 107 058

Fax: + 216 71 107 436

E-mail: mepi-medregion@state.gov

ABOUT MEPI:

The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), located within the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs at the U.S. Department of State, assists efforts to expand political participation, strengthen civil society and the rule of law, empower women and youth, create educational opportunities, and foster economic reform throughout the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

MEPI Regional Office, Tunis

Housed at the U.S. Embassy in Tunis, administers MEPI local programs in Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, and West Bank/Gaza, and accounts for around \$2 million in program funding each year. In addition to coordinating with U.S. Embassies throughout the region, the Tunis RO organizes conferences (such as the Business Women's Summit and Student Leaders Alumni Conference), facilitates exchange programs (such as the Leaders for Democracy Fellowship program and the Students Leaders program), and provides a variety of funding opportunities (such as the MEPI Local Grants program and Civil Society Grants), as well as supporting visits, seminars, and training programs designed to advance reform.

We are on the web!
www.medregion.mepi.state.gov